

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 62-78 and 80-82 are presently active. Claims 79 have been canceled without prejudice, Claims 62, 63, and 78 having been amended, and Claim 82 having been added by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, the title of the specification was objected to for not being descriptive. Claims 62-63 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yomogida et al (Jap. Pat. No. 2000-56536A). Claim 78 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Tanaka (Jap. Pat. No. 10-239937A). Claims 80-81 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka. Claim 79 was objected to for being dependent from a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 64-77 were indicated as being allowed.

Regarding the objection to the title, the title has been amended to be more descriptive. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the objection to the title has been overcome.

Firstly, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in Claim 79 and the indication of allowance for Claims 64-77. In order to expedite prosecution of the present application, independent Claim 78 has been rewritten to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 79, and Claim 79 has been canceled. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 78 and the claims dependent therefrom patentably define over the applied prior art.

M.P.E.P. § 2131 requires for anticipation that each and every feature of the claimed invention must be shown. Claims 62 and 63 as presently amended clarify as shown illustratively in Applicants' Figure 4 a tandem image forming device having an intermediate

image transfer body implemented as an inclined belt, a plurality of image forming sections arranged side by side and along the intermediate image transfer body, and each having a developing device and a cleaning device arranged around an image carrier. The tandem image forming device has one of nearby ones of the plurality of image forming sections having the cleaning device thereof positioned overhanging a part of the developing device of other image forming sections.

Yomogida et al show, as in Figure 2 thereof, cleaning devices 31-34 above developing devices 61-64 of other image forming sections, but do not show an inclined belt as the image transfer body and do not show that any of the cleaning devices are positioned overhanging a part of an adjacent developing device, as presently defined in Claims 62 and 63. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 62 and 63 patentably define over the applied prior art.

New Claim 82 defines features similar to that in allowed Claim 64. Thus, Claim 82, although not defining that the transfer belt could be an intermediate transfer belt, is believed to define over the applied prior art for reasons similar to those for Claim 64.

New Claim 83 defines features similar to that in allowed Claim 64 with no restriction that developing device and the cleaning device be a part of a process cartridge. Thus, Claim 82, with its combined feature of an inclined transfer belt along with one of the developing devices being arranged above an adjacent one of the cleaning devices, is believed to define over the applied prior art for reasons similar to those for Claim 64.

Application No. 10/810,831  
Reply to Office Action of July 28, 2004

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

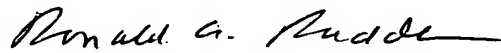
OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000  
Fax: (703) 413 -2220  
(OSMMN 08/03)  
GJM:JJK:RAR:elh

II:\ATTY\RAR\AMENDMENTS\250213US\AM1.DOC



---

Gregory J. Maier  
Attorney of Record  
Registration No. 25,599  
Ronald A. Rudder, PhD  
Registration No. 45,618